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hostile to none, nor can it be of advantage to any that the machinery devised by the government of the United States to secure the desired information should fail of its purpose.

This letter indicates clearly that the members of the Commission feel the delicacy of the position in which they have been placed, and that they desire, if possible, to escape from the purely *ex parte* ground on which they were appointed and be given something of an international standing. Justice Brewer's letter, which is admirable in nearly every line, is tantamount to a confession that unless the Commission be given at least a semi-international standing by the assistance of representatives from the two nations who are the parties to the dispute "the machinery devised by the government of the United States to secure the desired information" will fail of its purpose.

This expression of wish on the part of the Commission and Mr. Olney's action in communicating it to the British and Venezuelan ministers at Washington for transmission to their respective governments amount to a virtual abandonment of the extraordinary position taken by the Administration and by Congress that our country had a right, on its own motion purely, to proceed to determine the boundary and then if necessary to enforce its acceptance. Venezuela will certainly comply with the request of the commission. It is much to be hoped that Great Britain will do so also. If she should, the commission as thus supplemented will actually amount to an international advisory council, as suggested by Mr. Schurz; almost, indeed, to a board of arbitration. Would not all the three nations then be bound in honor if not literally and formally, to accept whatever decision the Commission might render?

The United States has certainly yielded a great deal in suggesting this course. We hope that Great Britain may do as much on her side, and thus a way may be found out of the dangerous *impasse* into which the two nations had gotten themselves.

THE IMPROBABILITY OF WAR.

It becomes more and more improbable that there will be war over the Venezuela trouble. This improbability has become so great as to amount to a practical impossibility. The course which opinion has taken since the 17th of December in both the United States and Great Britain is most convincing proof that peace principles have made great and permanent gain in recent years. This gain has been even greater than the most optimistic had supposed.

Those who intelligently watched the outburst and development of the opposition to the idea of war between the two countries must have noticed that this opposition proceeded at first largely upon the high ground of moral principle. It was not cringing to Great Britain on this

side, nor fear of the United States on the other that dictated it. A war was declared to be wrong, unchristian, unworthy of two nations so far advanced in civilization, out of harmony with the standards of duty and service guiding their national life and progress, and certain to disgrace them morally before the whole world. This high note was struck almost immediately and has been the predominating one, in pulpit, press and elsewhere, in developing opposition to the wild and selfish spirit which at first flamed up so hotly. Other considerations have of course added to their support. The commercial interests of the two nations have spoken loudly in behalf of peace. The uncertainties of an armed conflict with the destructive instruments of our time have compelled men to think. But, after all, or rather before all, the manifestation which we have witnessed of deep unwillingness to go to war, of condemnation of war talk and war spirit, has been primarily a moral demonstration. A friend said to us some days ago that he considered the month of December, 1895, as the greatest month in human history, for the reason we have just stated.

Again, it has been clear that the peace sentiment has become thoroughly conscious of itself, of its extent and unity and power, and this for the first time in the history of its formation. It has spoken itself out, and that, too, freely and fearlessly. It has even put the opposite spirit on the defensive. It has used every means of communication and intercommunication, daring even to utter itself boldly across the ocean from side to side, with high disregard of national boundaries and animosities. The peace sentiment of the two countries has thus proved that hereafter it will be impossible to stop its mouth by charges of sentimentalism and cowardice and want of patriotism. It may possibly not yet be strong enough to prevent a war, in certain contingencies, between the two nations, but we believe that it is, that the present splendid exhibition of itself will give it sufficient additional force to make it henceforth an effectual barrier against all approaches of war.

It has been felt not less than heard. Its influence at Washington has not been small either in Congress or with the Administration. The spirit there which at first was ready to go instantly to any extreme has been forced to yield to one of greater deliberation and thoughtfulness, and one which studies and promotes the things which make for peace rather than war. The result will be that hereafter no Administration will be so hasty to enter upon a course which will bring the country in a moment so near to the verge of war.

The effect in Great Britain has been somewhat slower in coming about but none the less marked. There was not on the other side, so far as appeared, the same outspoken and thorough condemnation of the course pursued by the Prime Minister in refusing to arbitrate the whole Venezuelan question as here of the rashness

and dictatorialness of the Administration. This slowness of British criticism of the course of the Foreign Office is accounted for in part by the fact that some of the essential features of the boundary dispute seem to have been studiously kept from the public knowledge. But from the first there was the same outspoken abhorrence of war on that side as on this, the same high moral protest against it, the same prophecy of its ethical impossibility. And as the British public have come into completer possession of the facts kept from them by the Foreign Office, their desire for peace has grown still stronger, and they now urge that Lord Salisbury must find a way to arbitrate the whole question and not allow the two countries to drift or be forced into war. Fear of the United States does not seem to us to have played any material part in this expression and development of pacific opinion in the mother country. It has grown out of a sincere aversion to war and love of peace.

Not the least remarkable feature of this unparalleled exhibition of the power of a righteous public opinion has been its international character. It has acted separately and spontaneously in each of the nations, but it has also worked in a combined way, so that both governments have felt the full force of its joint action. It is this phase, in particular, of the recent movement of public sentiment that leads us to believe that, in spite of surface disturbances and temporary and even violent manifestations of the lingering animosities of the past, the chain of common interests, of friendly feelings and of Christian purposes binding the two nations together will never hereafter snap asunder no matter what strain may be brought upon it.

THE NEW MONROE DOCTRINE.

The Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs has brought in a concurrent resolution which pretends to be a reassertion of the Monroe doctrine of 1823, but which in reality is the assertion of a new policy which neither Mr. Monroe nor his colleagues and early interpreters ever dreamed of inaugurating. The resolution was not unanimously approved in the committee, and it is likely to meet with vigorous opposition in open Senate, and also in the House; but it is nearly certain to pass both Houses after some debate. Here is the full text of the resolution, a portion of which we have italicised in order to call special attention to it:

“Resolved, by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring, that;

“Whereas, President Monroe in his message to Congress of Dec. 2, A. D. 1823, deemed it proper to assert as a principle in which the rights and interests of the United States are involved, that the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintained, were thenceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European power;

“And whereas, President Monroe further declared in

that message that the United States would consider any attempt by the allied powers of Europe to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety; that with the existing colonies and dependencies of any European power we have not interfered and should not interfere; but that with the governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration, and on just principles acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power, in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States; and further, reiterated in that message that it is impossible that the allied powers should extend their political system to any portion of either continent without endangering our peace and happiness;

“And whereas, the doctrine and policy so proclaimed by President Monroe have since been repeatedly asserted by the United States by executive declaration and action upon occasions and exigencies similar to the particular occasion and exigency which caused them to be first announced, and have been ever since their promulgation, and now are, the rightful policy of the United States;

“Therefore, be it resolved, that the United States of America reaffirms and confirms the doctrine and principles promulgated by President Monroe in his message of Dec. 2, 1823, and declares that it will assert and maintain the doctrine and those principles, and will regard any infringement thereof, and particularly any attempt by any European power, to take or acquire any new or additional territory on the American continent, or any island adjacent thereto, or any right of sovereignty or dominion in the same, in any case or instance as to which the United States shall deem such attempt to be dangerous to its peace or safety, by or through force, purchase, cession, occupation, pledge, colonization, protectorate, or by control of the easement in any canal or any other means of transit across the American isthmus, whether under unfounded pretension of right in cases of alleged boundary disputes or under any other unfounded pretensions, as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States, and as an interposition which it would be impossible, in any form, for the United States to regard with indifference.”

This resolution is one of the worst fruits of the recent group of events of which the President's Venezuela message was the centre. There is absolutely no ground whatever at the present time for the reassertion in any form of a policy which grew out of the disturbed and dangerous conditions which prevailed three-fourths of a century ago; much less for the extension of that policy in a way to make it a cloak for the ambitious national extension schemes of some of our public men. One would think from the tone of this resolution and from the eagerness to have it speedily passed, that we were in immediate danger of a general European invasion, which would not only overwhelm the independent South American nations, but threaten the early destruction of this great republic now grown to seventy millions of people. It is incredible that grave and intelligent Senators, supposed to have some appreciation of the historic fitness of things, should see in the British-Venezuelan boundary